

PLS460 COMPARATIVE POLITICS (US, UK, and JAPAN) (3 credit hours)

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Office hours: Monday & Tuesday 10.30 – 12.00

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Semesters: 2009 Fall

Meeting times: Monday & Wednesday 14.00 – 15.15 at D-201

DESCRIPTION: The course is a systematic analysis of the societal, cultural, institutional, and operational aspects of politics in three advanced countries: the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan. By analyzing democratic governments of these three countries in a comparative way, we can understand the flexibility and variety of modern democratic government. Among the topics we will focus on are: (1) political institutions, (2) political processes, (3) local governments, (4) styles of policy decision-making, (5) political leadership and leaders, (6) political party and party systems, (7) electoral systems and elections, (8) bureaucratic systems, and (9) foreign policies. In the final week we will examine different styles of democracy and try to identify the fundamental principles of democratic government.

OBJECTIVES: Our objective is to understand the variety and flexibility of modern democratic government by analyzing, in a comparative way, the system and operation of three major democracies: the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan. At the same time we would like to identify the fundamental principles of modern democratic government through comparison. This course also offers both Japanese and international students the valuable opportunity to look at politics of his/her own country in an objective way.

STUDY MATERIALS:

<No Textbook>

<Reference books, sources of readings and other information>

At the beginning of the course a list of reference books will be distributed.

ASSESSMENT: Student achievement will be measured in terms of student performance in the following three areas.

1. Examination at the end of first half (40%)
2. Examination at the end of second half (40%)
3. One assigned essay of 3000 words (20%)

COURSE FORMAT AND ACTIVITIES: Generally, class sessions will be conducted in lecture style. From time to time, we will use case studies to provide students opportunities to demonstrate that they know how to apply received theories introduced in lectures.

SCHEDULE:

1st Week	Introduction: What is 'Comparative Politics'
2nd Week	Social Structure and geo-political situation
3rd Week	Historical background
4th Week	Political culture
5th Week	Political system (1): Constitution and head of state
6th Week	Political system (2): The legislature
7th Week	Political system (3): The executive
8th Week	Mid-term Examination
9th Week	Economic system and class structure
10th Week	Party and party system (1): Political party
11th Week	Party and party system (2): Party system
12th Week	Electoral system and election
13th Week	Foreign policy: Internationalism, isolationism and colonialism
14th Week	Style of democracy: Consensus democracy vs. majority democracy
15th Week	Final Examination